

TOP SECRET

SECURITY INFORMATION

"11. Stalin will almost certainly remain undisputed Soviet ruler through the period of this estimate, provided he remains in good health. There probably have been disagreements on major policy matters within the Politburo and rivalries for Stalin's favor and for positions of advantage after Stalin's death. However, it is most unlikely that, within the period of this estimate, such rivalries and disagreements will seriously affect the unity and resolution of the Politburo or of its successor."

"16. Although the death of Stalin would be a shock to the Soviet regime, we estimate that the immediate transfer of authority to another leader or group would be effected in an orderly manner. The Communist Party of the USSR, the Secret Police, and the Soviet armed forces would almost certainly rally behind the new leadership, at least initially. Discord within the Politburo or its successor and between the Communist Party, the Soviet Police, and the Soviet armed forces might develop after the first few months. However, probable prior arrangements establishing the authority and power of the successor, Communist discipline, and fear of "foreign attack" would almost certainly prevent any discord from developing to the point of open conflict, at least within the period of this estimate. The new leadership would almost certainly attempt to follow the foreign and domestic policies established during recent years."

(NIE-64)

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WORKING PAPER